NUMB. CXXXVII.

# The GUARDIAN.

*——— ſanctus haberi,*
*Juſtitiæque tenax: factis dictiſque mereris?*
*Agnoſco procerem ———* Juv.

*Tueſday, Auguſt* 18. 1713.

HORACE, *Juvenal*, *Boileau*, and indeed the greateſt Writers in almoſt every Age, have expoſed, with all the Strength of Wit and good Senſe, the Vanity of a Man's valuing himſelf upon his Anceſtors, and endeavoured to ſhow that true Nobility conſiſts in Virtue, not in Birth. With Submiſſion however to ſo many great Authorities, I think they have puſhed this matter a little too far. We ought in Gratitude to Honour the Poſterity of thoſe who have raiſed either the Intereſt or Reputation of their Country, and by whoſe Labours we our ſelves are more Happy, Wiſe or Virtuous than we ſhould have been without them. Beſides, naturally ſpeaking, a Man bids fairer for Greatneſs of Soul, who is the Deſcendant of worthy Anceſtors, and has good Blood in his Veins, than one who is come of an ignoble and obſcure Parentage. For theſe Reaſons I think a Man of Merit, who is derived from an Illuſtrious Line, is very juſtly to be regarded more than a Man of equal Merit who has no Claim to Hereditary Honours. Nay, I think thoſe who are indifferent in themſelves, and have nothing elſe to diſtinguiſh them but the Virtues of their Fore-fathers, are to be looked upon with a degree of Veneration even upon that account, and to be more reſpected than the common Run of Men who are of low and vulgar Extraction.

After having thus aſcribed due Honours to Birth and Parentage, I muſt however take Notice of thoſe who arrogate to themſelves more Honours than are due to them on this Account. The firſt are ſuch who are not enough ſenſible that Vice and Ignorance taint the Blood, and that an unworthy Behaviour degrades and diſennobles a Man, in the Eye of the World, as much as Birth and Family aggrandize and exalt him.

The ſecond are thoſe who believe a new Man of an elevated Merit is not more to be honoured than an inſignificant and worthleſs Man who is deſcended from a long Line of Patriots and Heroes. Or, in other Words, behold with Contempt a Perſon who is ſuch a Man as the firſt Founder of their Family was, upon whoſe Reputation they value themſelves.

But I ſhall chiefly apply my ſelf to thoſe whoſe Quality ſits uppermoſt in all their Diſcourſe and Behaviour. An empty Man of a great Family is a Creature that is ſcarce converſible. You read his Anceſtry in his Smile, in his Air, in his Forehead, and has indeed nothing but his Nobility to give Employment to his Thoughts. Rank and Precedency are the important Points which he is always diſcuſſing within himſelf. A Gentleman of this Turn began a Speech in one of King *Charles*'s Parliaments: *Sir, I had the Honour to be born a time* —— upon which a rough honeſt Gentleman took him up ſhort, *I would fain know what that Gentleman means,*

&c

(Price Two Pence.)